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ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

ADDRESS OF LORD CHARNWOOD AT THE DEDICATION OF THE STATUE
OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON THE STATE HOUSE GROUNDS,
OCT. 6, 1918.

Mr. Chairman, Governor Lowden, Mr. Daniels, Ladies and Gentlemen: In the first place I have a message to give you, which is from my countrymen, not in England only, but in all those self-governing communities from Newfoundland to New Zealand, from South Africa to Canada, which are linked with England in this war. It is a message, I would even say, from not a few men among those strange nations of the East, in India, which even today, under the guardianship of England and her colonies, are making their first steps in the path of self-government. I have no right whatever to speak also for the French, our masters, and yours, in so many ways, but I am going to speak for them.

On behalf of all of these, the self-governing communities of the world outside of this Union, I beg to offer the most heartfelt congratulations and birthday good wishes to the great Commonwealth of Illinois, older than some of those communities, and younger, again, it may be by some years, than England, which now completes these hundred years of vigorous life, which have won it so high a place among the free commonwealths of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Among the great dead who have spoken the English language, more and more as the years go on, two men stand out, eclipsing all others, not only by the loftiness of their genius, but by the appeal which they make to the common heart of men. One of them was William Shakespeare, and the other—by the way, a great student of Shakespeare—was Abraham Lincoln.

In this terrible struggle in which all civilization is involved, to what statesmen of the past can we turn in comparison for lessons of wise statesmanship, effectual and profound?

Why, it is a singular fact that there is no statesman, however able, whose example is so often quoted in England today as that of Abraham Lincoln.

But there is more than that. Men are fighting, men are dying today, for ideas of democracy, of freedom, of equality. It is well, when our sons are dying for that, that we should sometimes consider a little deeply what these words mean. How can we govern ourselves, when some of us, God knows, are not wise? In what sense are men equal, ought they to be equal, when in certain obvious ways nature herself has fashioned them so unequal? Where shall we look for the answer to these paradoxes which sometimes baffle us? I speak as a student. There is no statesman, no poet, no philosopher, whose thoughts on these deep matters, are at once so profound and far reaching, and put in language so transparently simple, as Abraham Lincoln. And perhaps the deepest philosophy that was ever uttered on these momentous questions of democracy was uttered upon Illinois platforms in those wonderful debates which Lincoln held upon your soil with the great Douglas, his generous antagonist, and when the great crisis came, his friend, who was so worthily commemorated this morning.

But there is something more than that. Beyond his statesmanship, beyond the profundity of his thought, beyond the poetry of his language, there was something interwoven with his genius, which brings it singularly near to the hearts of men of all conditions and characters and kinds, where ever their lot in life may be cast.

I might well, I think, ask first this question: How comes it that not only I, brought up as an English boy, but untold thousands of Englishmen, I can safely say, though we knew little of America, and understood nothing at all about the issues of your Civil War, nevertheless, quite early in boyhood fell under the spell of Lincoln's name?

I think in part it is for this reason: there is a type of manhood—it has, of course, its corresponding type of womanhood—but there is a type of manhood which at his mother's knee, every well brought up American boy has been taught to think of as American, and which every well brought up English boy

has been taught to think of as English. It is the type of the man who can, when the occasion comes, be the most terrible of all fighting men, but who, in the main, and more and more as the years go by, is above all things gentle and pitiful in his dealings, absolutely honest, and in his inner heart, intensely humble.

It is a type which bears some resemblance to the old world ideal of the chivalrous knight, but it differs from it; it is more simple, more humble, more full of sound common sense, and more ready always to take life upon the amusing side. Well, of that type of manhood which I have described so poorly, but which all of us recognize, the very pattern in history was Abraham Lincoln.

Let me ask again, how is it that of all great statesmen, however much we revere their names, none has such a hold upon our affection as Lincoln has? Chiefly it is this: More than any of them he brought to bear on great questions of state just that sort of wisdom which every man and woman can apply in the common affairs of his or her daily life. There never was a great man who had so thoroughly learned, so heartily accepted, the hard and wholesome conditions of our common human life, set as we are in a world which is always very puzzling, and is sometimes very rough; set as we are to do the best we can, and not to dream about some impossible better; set as we are to do the best we can and yet be always awake to the better which may any day suddenly become possible. That is the union of the practical man and the idealist, a union without which practical qualities and idealism are alike—vanity. Of that union again the pattern for all time was Abraham Lincoln.

With the help of Mr. O'Connor's work, and that of other artists, with the help of some of those old friends of Lincoln, a few of whom I have had the privilege of meeting this day, we seem to see the man himself as we read his character in some of those simple sentences of his. "I am here," he seems to say, "I must do the best I can to bear the responsibility of taking the course which I feel I ought to take." "The subject is on my mind day and night; whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do it." "I see the storm coming, and I know

that God's hand is in it. If he has a place and a work for me, and I think he has, I believe I am ready."

These are the unmistakable accents of a manly humility, which is, perhaps, the most uncommon of all the Christian graces, but which, when it is really there, gives to its possessor a tremendous power.

Humble he was, and we cherish his memory for every little thing about it, that to the unthinking mind might seem rough, for the little things that remind one that he had been and was proud to have been a day laborer upon Illinois soil. These things endear him to us. Don't let them hide from us the fact that he had the statesman's genius, and that he had the prophet's vision. And so, before I commence drawing to a close, may I read to you, and may I ask you to note their significance today, some words which he spoke on that last journey from Springfield on his way to occupy the President's chair at Washington.

He was speaking, as he said, and as I believe without preparation, in the Hall of Independence at Philadelphia. He said: "I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration of Independence. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept the confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation from the motherland, it was that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty, not only to the people of this country, but a hope to the world for all future time." "It was that which gave promise that in due time the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men."

We are beginning to see that prophecy fulfilled. Of course I do not mean that in this war, or any single struggle, we shall perfectly achieve those ideals of human progress after which you, with your magnificent daring dash, and we, in our persistent, blundering, faithful way, are striving through the ages.

Not one war will win that far goal. Every great work that is done is, in his familiar phrase, "a work thus far so

nobly advanced." But the work which Lincoln accomplished when he saved the Union of these States was an indispensable step to the work which we and our sons have set our hands to do today—from which neither America, nor France, nor the British Empire, will turn back until our purpose is accomplished.

Governor Lowden, in his gracious telegram to invite me here, spoke of the fact that Americans and Englishmen are now fighting side by side on behalf of those principles for which Lincoln lived and died. Yes, we meet here in the presence of the dead. Thinking of that great man, we think all the while of the fields where my nephews have fallen, where, if the war lasts, my son may fall; where, it seems to me, all the best young men I knew at home have fallen, and fallen not in vain. Where lives, it hurts the heart to think how many, have had to be sacrificed by the French, and sacrificed not in vain. And where the sons of America and the sons of Illinois are now falling, and falling not in vain.

I cannot find words of mine fitting to sum up the feelings of this day, and I must turn to the words so often quoted, and never quoted once too often; words in which you will permit, and he would invite me, to make one trifling change: "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain." "That our far-scattered, yet united nations, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."